

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for providing cellular telephone service during cluster testing, comprising:
 - (a) a new mobile switching center having a temporary point code on which a cellular telephone can register, the new mobile switching center having a temporary point code;
 - (b) an old mobile switching center having a second point code, wherein the temporary point code is different from the second point code;
 - (c) a trunk group connected between the new mobile switching center and the old mobile switching center to route one or more telephone calls between the old mobile switching center and the new mobile switching center;
 - (d) a communication link connected between the new mobile switching center and the STPs to provide a communication path for sending messages between the old mobile switching center and the new mobile switching center.
 - (e) a home location register for storing location information comprising an identification of the cellular telephone and a point code of the new mobile switching center, wherein the home location register receives a registration message comprising location information from the new mobile switching center when the cellular telephone registers.
2. A system recited in claim 1, further comprising a switch transfer point that determines a point code corresponding to the home location register and forwards a location request received from the new mobile switching center to the home location register to determine a location of a second cellular telephone that is called by the first cellular telephone.

3. The system recited in claim 2, further comprising a global translation title table that is used by the switch transfer point to determine the point code corresponding to the home location register.

4. The system recited in claim 1, further comprising a new range of temporary local directory numbers assigned to the new mobile switching center.

5. The system recited in claim 4, further comprising a route request sent by the home location register to the new mobile switching center to obtain a temporary local directory number to send to a mobile switching center in the system other than the new mobile switching center that provides routing information for routing a telephone call to the cellular telephone.

6. The system recited in claim 1, further comprising:
an initial access message sent over the communication link from the old mobile switching center to the new mobile switching center to request a call to be routed over the trunk group;
means for paging the cellular telephone; and
an answer complete message sent over the communication link from the new mobile switching center to the old mobile switching unit when the cellular telephone is answered.

7. A method for maintaining cellular telephone service in a cellular telephone network during cluster testing comprising the steps of:
assigning a temporary point code to a new mobile switching center;
cutting the new mobile switching center into the cellular telephone network;

building a trunk group between the mobile switching center and an old switching center that the new mobile switching center will replace; and

building a signaling link between the new mobile switching center and the old mobile switching center, wherein telephone calls are set up on the trunk group to maintain cellular telephone service during cluster testing.

8. The method recited in claim 7, further comprising the step of assigning a new TLDN range to the new mobile switching center.

9. The method recited in claim 7, further comprising the steps of:
receiving an initial address message from the old MSC on the signaling link;
sending an address-complete message in response to the initial address message; and
ringing a cellular telephone in accordance with the initial address message.